

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, line 2, please insert new paragraph as follows:

This application is a divisional of application Serial No. 09/713,166, filed March 13, 2002, which claims priority of European Patent application No. 99850174.6, filed November 19, 1999, and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/166,564, filed November 19, 1999. -- and

Page 1, lines 9-17, please amend paragraph as follows:

Background Information

In the papermaking art, wet strength agents like epichlorohydrin-based resins, for example polyaminoamide epichlorohydrin resins have been used for a long time to enhance the strength of paper. Such resins are disclosed in US 3,700,623 and US 3,772,076. The wet strength of a paper relates to its ability to maintain physical integrity and to resist tearing, bursting, and shredding under use, especially under wet conditions. A further important property of wet strengthened paper is the softness, especially for tissue paper or the like. The softness can be described as the tactile sensation perceived when holding or rubbing a paper across the skin.

Page 2, lines 13-20, please amend paragraph as follows:

Summary of the Invention

According to the present invention, it has been found that further and improved wet strength agents for paper can be obtained by a composition containing polymeric particles and hydrophobic hydrocarbon groups providing side-chain substituents on wet strength resins. It has also been found a new method for the production of such wet strength resins and agents. It has further been discovered that the wet strength agents and resins produced by the method according to the present invention give paper improved softness properties without negatively affecting the absorbency properties.

Page 2, lines 21-32 and Page 3, lines 1-3, please amend paragraph as follows:

Detailed Description of the Invention

More specifically, the invention relates to paper wet strength agents comprising polymeric particles and wet strength resins comprising a cationic nitrogen-containing polymer having hydrophobic side-chain substituents. The invention further relates to a method for the production of a paper wet strength agent comprising a first step of reacting a nitrogen-containing polymer with a hydrophobic compound to provide a nitrogen-containing polymer with hydrophobic side-chain substituents, a second step of reacting the product obtained with a crosslinker to form a cationic wet strength resin, and a third step comprising emulsion polymerisation of one or more ethylenically unsaturated monomers in the presence of the wet strength resin formed. Further, the invention relates to a paper wet strength agent obtainable from the method above. The invention further relates to a new wet strength resin and a method for preparing a wet strength resin according to the two first steps as described herein. The invention also relates to the production of paper comprising addition of a paper wet strength resin or agent to a cellulosic suspension and to the use of a paper wet strength resin or agent for the production of paper. The invention also relates to paper comprising paper wet strength resins and agents. The invention is further defined in the appended claims.